

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section  
5 22-80 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/22-80)

7 Sec. 22-80. Student athletes; concussions and head  
8 injuries.

9 (a) The General Assembly recognizes all of the following:

10 (1) Concussions are one of the most commonly reported  
11 injuries in children and adolescents who participate in  
12 sports and recreational activities. The Centers for  
13 Disease Control and Prevention estimates that as many as  
14 3,900,000 sports-related and recreation-related  
15 concussions occur in the United States each year. A  
16 concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or  
17 body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the  
18 skull. The risk of catastrophic injuries or death are  
19 significant when a concussion or head injury is not  
20 properly evaluated and managed.

21 (2) Concussions are a type of brain injury that can  
22 range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain  
23 normally works. Concussions can occur in any organized or

1 unorganized sport or recreational activity and can result  
2 from a fall or from players colliding with each other, the  
3 ground, or with obstacles. Concussions occur with or  
4 without loss of consciousness, but the vast majority of  
5 concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

6 (3) Continuing to play with a concussion or symptoms of  
7 a head injury leaves a young athlete especially vulnerable  
8 to greater injury and even death. The General Assembly  
9 recognizes that, despite having generally recognized  
10 return-to-play standards for concussions and head  
11 injuries, some affected youth athletes are prematurely  
12 returned to play, resulting in actual or potential physical  
13 injury or death to youth athletes in this State.

14 (4) Student athletes who have sustained a concussion  
15 may need informal or formal accommodations, modifications  
16 of curriculum, and monitoring by medical or academic staff  
17 until the student is fully recovered. To that end, all  
18 schools are encouraged to establish a return-to-learn  
19 protocol that is based on peer-reviewed scientific  
20 evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and  
21 Prevention guidelines and conduct baseline testing for  
22 student athletes.

23 (b) In this Section:

24 "Athletic trainer" means an athletic trainer licensed  
25 under the Illinois Athletic Trainers Practice Act.

26 "Coach" means any volunteer or employee of a school who is

1 responsible for organizing and supervising students to teach  
2 them or train them in the fundamental skills of an  
3 interscholastic athletic activity. "Coach" refers to both head  
4 coaches and assistant coaches.

5 "Concussion" means a complex pathophysiological process  
6 affecting the brain caused by a traumatic physical force or  
7 impact to the head or body, which may include temporary or  
8 prolonged altered brain function resulting in physical,  
9 cognitive, or emotional symptoms or altered sleep patterns and  
10 which may or may not involve a loss of consciousness.

11 "Department" means the Department of Financial and  
12 Professional Regulation.

13 "Game official" means a person who officiates at an  
14 interscholastic athletic activity, such as a referee or umpire,  
15 including, but not limited to, persons enrolled as game  
16 officials by the Illinois High School Association or Illinois  
17 Elementary School Association.

18 "Interscholastic athletic activity" means any organized  
19 school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activity for students,  
20 generally outside of school instructional hours, under the  
21 direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader,  
22 including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball,  
23 cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey,  
24 football, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching  
25 band, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, swimming and diving,  
26 tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee,

1 volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic  
2 athletics are deemed to be interscholastic activities.

3 "Licensed healthcare professional" means a person who has  
4 experience with concussion management and who is a nurse, a  
5 psychologist who holds a license under the Clinical  
6 Psychologist Licensing Act and specializes in the practice of  
7 neuropsychology, a physical therapist licensed under the  
8 Illinois Physical Therapy Act, an occupational therapist  
9 licensed under the Illinois Occupational Therapy Practice Act.

10 "Nurse" means a person who is employed by or volunteers at  
11 a school and is licensed under the Nurse Practice Act as a  
12 registered nurse, practical nurse, or advanced practice nurse.

13 "Physician" means a physician licensed to practice  
14 medicine in all of its branches under the Medical Practice Act  
15 of 1987.

16 "School" means any public or private elementary or  
17 secondary school, including a charter school.

18 "Student" means an adolescent or child enrolled in a  
19 school.

20 (c) This Section applies to any interscholastic athletic  
21 activity, including practice and competition, sponsored or  
22 sanctioned by a school, the Illinois Elementary School  
23 Association, or the Illinois High School Association. This  
24 Section applies beginning with the 2016-2017 ~~2015-2016~~ school  
25 year.

26 (d) The governing body of each public or charter school and

1 the appropriate administrative officer of a private school with  
2 students enrolled who participate in an interscholastic  
3 athletic activity shall appoint or approve a concussion  
4 oversight team. Each concussion oversight team shall establish  
5 a return-to-play protocol, based on peer-reviewed scientific  
6 evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and  
7 Prevention guidelines, for a student's return to  
8 interscholastic athletics practice or competition following a  
9 force or impact believed to have caused a concussion. Each  
10 concussion oversight team shall also establish a  
11 return-to-learn protocol, based on peer-reviewed scientific  
12 evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and  
13 Prevention guidelines, for a student's return to the classroom  
14 after that student is believed to have experienced a  
15 concussion, whether or not the concussion took place while the  
16 student was participating in an interscholastic athletic  
17 activity.

18 Each concussion oversight team must include to the extent  
19 practicable at least one physician. If a school employs an  
20 athletic trainer, the athletic trainer must be a member of the  
21 school concussion oversight team to the extent practicable. If  
22 a school employs a nurse, the nurse must be a member of the  
23 school concussion oversight team to the extent practicable. At  
24 a minimum, a school shall appoint a person who is responsible  
25 for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and  
26 return-to-learn protocols ~~protocols~~ adopted by the concussion

1 oversight team. A school may appoint other licensed healthcare  
2 professionals to serve on the concussion oversight team.

3 (e) A student may not participate in an interscholastic  
4 athletic activity for a school year until the student and the  
5 student's parent or guardian or another person with legal  
6 authority to make medical decisions for the student have signed  
7 a form for that school year that acknowledges receiving and  
8 reading written information that explains concussion  
9 prevention, symptoms, treatment, and oversight and that  
10 includes guidelines for safely resuming participation in an  
11 athletic activity following a concussion. The form must be  
12 approved by the Illinois High School Association.

13 (f) A student must be removed from an interscholastic  
14 athletics practice or competition immediately if one of the  
15 following persons believes the student might have sustained a  
16 concussion during the practice or competition:

17 (1) a coach;

18 (2) a physician;

19 (3) a game official;

20 (4) an athletic trainer;

21 (5) the student's parent or guardian or another person  
22 with legal authority to make medical decisions for the  
23 student;

24 (6) the student; or

25 (7) any other person deemed appropriate under the  
26 school's return-to-play protocol.

1 (g) A student removed from an interscholastic athletics  
2 practice or competition under this Section may not be permitted  
3 to practice or compete again following the force or impact  
4 believed to have caused the concussion until:

5 (1) the student has been evaluated, using established  
6 medical protocols based on peer-reviewed scientific  
7 evidence consistent with Centers for Disease Control and  
8 Prevention guidelines, by a treating physician (chosen by  
9 the student or the student's parent or guardian or another  
10 person with legal authority to make medical decisions for  
11 the student) or an athletic trainer working under the  
12 supervision of a physician;

13 (2) the student has successfully completed each  
14 requirement of the return-to-play protocol established  
15 under this Section necessary for the student to return to  
16 play;

17 (3) the student has successfully completed each  
18 requirement of the return-to-learn protocol established  
19 under this Section necessary for the student to return to  
20 learn;

21 (4) the treating physician or athletic trainer working  
22 under the supervision of a physician has provided a written  
23 statement indicating that, in the physician's professional  
24 judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and  
25 return to learn; and

26 (5) the student and the student's parent or guardian or

1 another person with legal authority to make medical  
2 decisions for the student:

3 (A) have acknowledged that the student has  
4 completed the requirements of the return-to-play and  
5 return-to-learn protocols necessary for the student to  
6 return to play;

7 (B) have provided the treating physician's or  
8 athletic trainer's written statement under subdivision  
9 (4) of this subsection (g) to the person responsible  
10 for compliance with the return-to-play and  
11 return-to-learn protocols under this subsection (g)  
12 and the person who has supervisory responsibilities  
13 under this subsection (g); and

14 (C) have signed a consent form indicating that the  
15 person signing:

16 (i) has been informed concerning and consents  
17 to the student participating in returning to play  
18 in accordance with the return-to-play and  
19 return-to-learn protocols;

20 (ii) understands the risks associated with the  
21 student returning to play and returning to learn  
22 and will comply with any ongoing requirements in  
23 the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols;  
24 and

25 (iii) consents to the disclosure to  
26 appropriate persons, consistent with the federal

1 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability  
2 Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-191), of the treating  
3 physician's or athletic trainer's written  
4 statement under subdivision (4) of this subsection  
5 (g) and, if any, the return-to-play and  
6 return-to-learn recommendations of the treating  
7 physician or the athletic trainer, as the case may  
8 be.

9 A coach of an interscholastic athletics team may not  
10 authorize a student's return to play or return to learn.

11 The district superintendent or the superintendent's  
12 designee in the case of a public elementary or secondary  
13 school, the chief school administrator or that person's  
14 designee in the case of a charter school, or the appropriate  
15 administrative officer or that person's designee in the case of  
16 a private school shall supervise an athletic trainer or other  
17 person responsible for compliance with the return-to-play  
18 protocol and shall supervise the person responsible for  
19 compliance with the return-to-learn protocol. The person who  
20 has supervisory responsibilities under this paragraph may not  
21 be a coach of an interscholastic athletics team.

22 (h) (1) The Illinois High School Association shall approve,  
23 for coaches and game officials of interscholastic athletic  
24 activities, training courses that provide for not less than 2  
25 hours of training in the subject matter of concussions,  
26 including evaluation, prevention, symptoms, risks, and

1 long-term effects. The Association shall maintain an updated  
2 list of individuals and organizations authorized by the  
3 Association to provide the training.

4 (2) The following persons must take a training course in  
5 accordance with paragraph (4) of this subsection (h) from an  
6 authorized training provider at least once every 2 years:

7 (A) a coach of an interscholastic athletic activity;

8 (B) a nurse who serves as a member of a concussion  
9 oversight team and is an employee, representative, or agent  
10 of a school;

11 (C) a game official of an interscholastic athletic  
12 activity; and

13 (D) a nurse who serves on a volunteer basis as a member  
14 of a concussion oversight team for a school.

15 (3) A physician who serves as a member of a concussion  
16 oversight team shall, to the greatest extent practicable,  
17 periodically take an appropriate continuing medical education  
18 course in the subject matter of concussions.

19 (4) For purposes of paragraph (2) of this subsection (h):

20 (A) a coach or game officials, as the case may be, must  
21 take a course described in paragraph (1) of this subsection  
22 (h).

23 (B) an athletic trainer must take a concussion-related  
24 continuing education course from an athletic trainer  
25 continuing education sponsor approved by the Department;  
26 and

1           (C) a nurse must take a course concerning the subject  
2           matter of concussions that has been approved for continuing  
3           education credit by the Department.

4           (5) Each person described in paragraph (2) of this  
5           subsection (h) must submit proof of timely completion of an  
6           approved course in compliance with paragraph (4) of this  
7           subsection (h) to the district superintendent or the  
8           superintendent's designee in the case of a public elementary or  
9           secondary school, the chief school administrator or that  
10          person's designee in the case of a charter school, or the  
11          appropriate administrative officer or that person's designee  
12          in the case of a private school.

13          (6) A physician, athletic trainer, or nurse who is not in  
14          compliance with the training requirements under this  
15          subsection (h) may not serve on a concussion oversight team in  
16          any capacity.

17          (7) A person required under this subsection (h) to take a  
18          training course in the subject of concussions must initially  
19          complete the training not later than September 1, 2016.

20          (i) The governing body of each public or charter school and  
21          the appropriate administrative officer of a private school with  
22          students enrolled who participate in an interscholastic  
23          athletic activity shall develop a school-specific emergency  
24          action plan for interscholastic athletic activities to address  
25          the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the  
26          condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. The plan

1 shall include a delineation of roles, methods of communication,  
2 available emergency equipment, and access to and a plan for  
3 emergency transport. This emergency action plan must be:

4 (1) in writing;

5 (2) reviewed by the concussion oversight team;

6 (3) approved by the district superintendent or the  
7 superintendent's designee in the case of a public  
8 elementary or secondary school, the chief school  
9 administrator or that person's designee in the case of a  
10 charter school, or the appropriate administrative officer  
11 or that person's designee in the case of a private school;

12 (4) distributed to all appropriate personnel;

13 (5) posted conspicuously at all venues utilized by the  
14 school; and

15 (6) reviewed annually by all athletic trainers, first  
16 responders, coaches, school nurses, athletic directors,  
17 and volunteers for interscholastic athletic activities.

18 (j) The State Board of Education may adopt rules as  
19 necessary to administer this Section.

20 (Source: P.A. 99-245, eff. 8-3-15.)

21 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
22 becoming law.